

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01 DODE-00

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COME-00 TRSE-00 SAM-01 /079 W

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R 220635Z AUG 74

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1966

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 HONG KONG 9392

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PFOR, CH, TH

SUBJECT: THAI INSURGENCY AND PRC-RTG RELATIONS

REF: HONG KONG 9136 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY. IN CONTRAST TO LAST YEAR WHEN PEKING MEDIA IGNORED
THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE OUTBREAK OF "ARMED STRUGGLE" IN THAILAND
NCNA RECENTLY COMMEMORATED THE EVENT BY REPLAYING COMMUNIST PARTY
OF THAILAND CLAIMS. THE NCNA COVERAGE WAS PARTICULARLY
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SIGNIFICATN BECAUSE THE PROSPECTS FOR "ARMED STRUGGLE" WERE SO

POSITIVELY PORTRAYED AND BECAUSE UNFAVORABLE DIRECT REFERENCE WAS MADE TO PTG OFFICIALS. PEKING'S ACTIONS APPEAR TO STEM BOTH FROM THE CURRENT DOMESTIC POLITICAL MOVEMENT WHICH IS STRESSING IDEOLOGY AND A DESIRE TO JOB BANGKOK ABOUT FOLLOWING UP WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF CLOSER RTG-PRC RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. NCNA (AUGUST 10) NOTED THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE THAI PEOPLE'S ARMED STRUGGLE BY CARRYING TWO VOICE OF PEOPLE OF THAILAND (VPT) ITEMS ACCLAIMING SUCCESSES ACHIEVED "UNDER THE CORRECT LEADERSHIP OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THAILAND." IN CLAIMING GAINS IN MILITARY STRENGTH AND EXPANSION OF GUERRILLA AREAS AND BASES, A VPT EDITORIAL BROADCAST ALSO ASSERTED THAT THE NUMBER OF "REGIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENTS ELECTED BY THE PEOPLE" HAD GROWN AND BECOME MORE CONSOLIDATED. THE NCNA REPLAYS WERE NOTABLE BECAUSE THE ANNIVERSARY WAS NOT COMMEMORATED IN CHINESE MEDIA LAST YEAR. MOREOVER, THE NCNA AUGUST 10 REPLAY BROKE WITH THE RECENT PATTERN OF NO DIRECT MENTION OF RTG LEADERS BY REFERRING TO ACTIONS BY "THE SANYA AUTHORITIES" TO "SUPPRESS THE PEOPLE." NATABLE ALSO WAS THE GENERALLY MORE UPBEAT PORTRAYAL OF THE PROSPECTS FOR "ARMED STRUGGLE..TO SEIZE POLITICAL POWER BY ARMED FORCE."

2. DISCUSSING ABOVE DEVELOPMENTS WITH RTG CONSUL GENERAL THALERNGCHAI CHARTPRASERT, U.S. CONGENOFF OPINED THAT PEKING'S MEDIA ATTENTION WAS A REFLECTION OF THE CURRENT INTERNAL PRG POLITICAL MOVEMENT WHICH IS PLACING GREATER STRESS ON IDEOLOGY AND DOCTRINE. THALERNGCHAI THOUGHT THIS VALID BUT SAID HE WOULD GIVE EQUAL WEIGHT TO LIKELIHOOD THAT CHINESE WANTED TO GET MESSAGE ACROSS TO THAI ABOUT NOT TAKING PEKING FOR GRANTED. HE NOTED THAT SIX MONTHS HAD ELAPSED SINCE A RTG SPORTS DELEGATION LED BY THEN DEFENSE MINISTER DAWEE HAD VISITED THE PRC IN A MOVE TO EXPAND CONTACTS. BOTH SIDES HAD RECOGNIZED THAT SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITIONING OF THE THAI PUBLIC RE THE PRC WOULD BE USEFUL TO PAVE THE WAY FOR BETTER PRC-RTG RELATIONS (HONG KONG 1937). THE CHINESE OFFER MADE DURING DAWEE VISIT TO SELL 75,000 TONS OF DIESEL OIL TO RTG (IN ADDITION TO EARLIER SALE OF 50,000 TONS) WAS PART OF A PRC GOOD WILL GESTURE. FOLLOWING THE DAWEE VISIT PRC REPS HAD MOVED PROMPTLY TO SETTLE FINAL DETAILS RE SALE AND DELIVERY WITH THALERNGCHAI IN HONG KONG. (HE COULD NOT RECALL PRC UNIT PRICE FIGURES BUT SAID THEY CONFIDENTIAL

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WERE CLEARLY CONCESSIONAL, ALTHOUGH HIGHER THAN THOSE FOR 50,000 TONS.) DIFFICULTY WAS THAT WITH BALL CLEARLY IN THAI COURT, RTG HAD NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO ABROGATE THE LONG STANDING

REVOLUTIONARY PARTY ORDER (PRO) 53 WHICH BANS TRADE WITH PRC. THUS THAI COULD NOT EVEN MOVE AHEAD WITH THE PURCHASE OR DELIVERY OF THE OIL UNTIL THE BAN WAS RESCINDED.

3. THALERNGCHAI SAID THE PROBLEM WAS COMPLICATED BECAUSE WHEREAS PRO 53 SPECIFICALLY BANNED TRADE WITH CHINA, THE NEW LEGISLATION BEING FASHIONED IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO RESCIND THE BAN WOULD CONTAIN NO DIRECT REFERENCE TO CHINA. THIS WAS TO AVOID ANY INFERENCE OF DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT OR PREJUDICE AGAINST THE PRC. SIMILARLY THE LEGISLATION HAD TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT (BUT WITHOUT SO STATING) THE FACT THAT WHEREAS TRADE WITH CHINA HAD BEEN BANNED, THAI TRADE WITH OTHER COMMUNIST BLOC COUNTRIES HAD BEEN ALLOWED. THAT WAS WHY RTG MEASURES GOVERNING TRADE WITH ALL COUNTRIES IN WHICH FOREIGN TRADE IS OPERATED BY THE STATE WOULD BE INCORPORATED INTO THE NEW LEGISLATION. SUCH PROVISIONS WOULD SERVE TO PUT ALL TRADING PARTNERS THAT HAVE FOREIGN TRADE OPERATED BY THE STATE ON AN EQUAL FOOTING.

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4. THALERNGCHAI SAID HE THOUGHT THAT THE PRO 53 ABROGATION WOULD COME BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR BUT COMMENTED HE WAS NOT SURE THAT PEKING APPRECIATED ALL THE THAI LEGISLATIVE NUANCES. MOREOVER, HE NOTED THAT SEVERAL RTG LEADERS WITH WHOM THE CHINESE HAD BEEN DEALING, NAMELY DAWEE AND PRASIT KANACHANAWAT, WERE NO LONGER AS INFLUENTIAL AS BEFORE, AND THIS TOO MAY HAVE HAD SOME EFFECT ON CHINESE THINKING. IN SUM THALERNGCHAI THOUGHT THE CHINESE PROBABLY WERE FEELING SOME IMPATIENCE OVER THE SLOW PACE OF RELATIONS. THUS THE INCREASED PRC MEDIA ATTENTION TO THE THAI INSURGENTS WAS LIKELY AIMED AT JOGGING BANGKOK ABOUT CONFIDENTIAL

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NOT LETTING RELATIONS WITH PEKING DRIFT.

5. ASKED IF THE CHINESE HAD GIVEN ANY PREVIOUS SPECIFIC SIGNALS OF IMPATIENCE, THALERNGCHAI SAID HE HIMSELF WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY. LOCALLY SOME WEEKS BACK HE HAD RECEIVED A SERIES OF SOCIAL INVITATIONS FROM VARIOUS PRC REPS IN HONG KONG. BECAUSE OF OTHER DEMANDS AT THE TIME HE HAD BEEN FORCED TO DECLINE MOST. SINCE THAT TIME HE HAD NOT SOUGHT TO EXPAND SOCIAL CONTACTS WITH LOCAL PRC REPS, SINCE THEY MIGHT MISCONSTRUE SUCH APPROACHES TO BE THE RESULT OF BANGKOK INSTRUCTIONS OF WHICH HE HAD NONE. HE OCCASIONALLY SEES RPC REPS AT LARGE SOCIAL GATHERINGS AND THEY SEEM CORDIAL AND FRIENDLY.

6. THALERNGCHAI ADDED THE FURTHER THOUGHT THAT PEKING MAY ALSO BE SEEKING TO CONVEY TO OTHER SEA COUNTRIES BESIDES THAILAND THAT THE CHINESE ARE NOT TO BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED. HE POSTULATED THAT THE IMPETUS FOR THIS MAY STEM FROM PEKING'S CONCERN THAT RECENT FAST MOVING INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS, PARTICULARLY THE CHANGE IN THE U.S. PRESIDENCY, HAD MAGNIFIED POLITICAL DOUBTS AND UNCERTAINTIES AMONG THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES. THE CHINESE MAY SEE THIS AS AFFORDING THE SOVIETS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CAPITALIZE ON THESE UNCERTAINTIES. UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES PEKING MIGHT CONSIDER IT TIMELY TO FLEX ITS IDEOLOGICAL MUSCLES IN AREAS WHERE SUCH MATTERS ARE OF CONCERN. CROSS

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